United Nations A/53/156 – E/1998/78

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
29 June 1998

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-third session
Item 97 of the preliminary list*
Environment and sustainable development

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 1998
Agenda item 13 (a) of the provisional agenda**
Economic and environmental questions: sustainable development

Products harmful to health and the environment

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–3	3
II.	Review of the Consolidated List	4–18	3
	A. Arrangements for the production of the List	4–5	3
	B. Format, content and scope	6–10	3
	C. Computer/Internet access	11	4
	D. Periodicity and language versions	12–14	4
	E. Dissemination and utilization	15–18	5
III.	Developments since the last triennial report	19–38	5
	A. Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development	19–25	5
	1. Inter-Organizational Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals	21–23	6
	2. Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety	24–25	6

* A/53/50.
** E/1998/100.

98-19042 (E) 130798

B. Prior informed consent 26–28 6
C. Other developments 29–31 7
D. Technical assistance/capacity-building 32–38 7
IV. Future trends and emerging issues 39–45 8
V. Conclusions and recommendations 46–53 9

I. Introduction

1. The preparation of the Consolidated List of Products Whose Consumption and/or Sale Have Been Banned, Withdrawn, Severely Restricted or Not Approved by Governments was initiated in response to General Assembly resolution 37/137 of 17 December 1982,[1] on the basis of the work already being undertaken within the United Nations system. The Assembly requested that the List be easy to read and that it contain both generic/chemical and brand names, as well as the names of all manufacturers, and a short reference to the decisions taken by Governments that had led to the banning, withdrawal or severe restriction of the products.

2. Two years later, in its resolution 39/229 of 18 December 1984, the Assembly decided, *inter alia*, that an updated List should be issued annually, and that the data should be made available to Governments and other users in such a form as to permit direct computer access to it. The Assembly also decided that the format of the List should be kept under continuing review with a view to its improvement in cooperation with the relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, taking into account its complementary nature, the experience obtained and the views expressed by Governments. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly at its forty-first session and every third year thereafter, through Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the above resolutions.

3. The present report, which has been prepared for the fifth triennial review of the List, provides an overview of major developments since the issuance of the fourth review in 1995 regarding harmful products and their effects on human health and the environment, and makes proposals regarding the possible impact of these developments on the format, content and coverage of the List. The report also discusses changes that may affect its production and distribution.

II. Review of the Consolidated List

A. Arrangements for the production of the List

4. The arrangements for the production of the List have remained essentially the same, apart from minor adjustments, as those described in the first triennial review. Since they have already been outlined in previous reports of the Secretary-General (see A/41/329-E/1986/83; A/44/276-E/1989/78; A/47/222-E/1992/57 and Corr.1; and A/50/182-E/1995/66 and Corr.1), they are not reproduced here again. Only the most recent adjustments are outlined. In 1985, the United Nations Secretariat, in close cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Environment Programme/International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals (UNEP/IRPTC), carried out the first review of the List, focusing on arrangements for the preparation of future issues, the need for criteria for determining the inclusion of products, the question of the legal and public health context of regulatory actions that had not been included in the first issue of the List, and the treatment of commercial data. As a result of the review, a memorandum of collaboration, outlining the division of responsibilities between the United Nations, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNEP/IRPTC, was agreed upon and is still in effect.

5. Consultations are held periodically between the United Nations Secretariat, WHO and UNEP/IRPTC to review these arrangements and discuss issues of concern to participating organizations. As a result of the discussions at the last meeting, proposals were made to divide the List into two parts, to be published in alternate years, one focusing on pharmaceuticals and the other on chemicals. Following the approval of these proposals by the General Assembly as part of the triennial review of 1995, the sixth issue of the List was published in 1997 under the new arrangement, and contained information on pharmaceuticals only; the seventh issue, which is currently under preparation and scheduled for publication later in 1998, will contain information on chemicals only.

B. Format, content and scope

6. The format and content have been under continuous review since its initial preparation, and periodic efforts have been made to expand its coverage and scope. The List has remained easy to read and understand, in line with General Assembly resolution 37/137. There has been an increase in the number of products listed and the number of Governments reporting with each new edition of the Consolidated List. The first issue covered less than 500 products regulated by 60 Governments; the fifth issue, the last to deal with both pharmaceuticals and chemical products, covered regulatory actions taken by 94 Governments on more than 700 products; the sixth issue, dealing with pharmaceuticals only, contained information on 366 products regulated by 77 Governments.

7. With respect to the content of the List, it should be noted that decisions taken by a limited number of

Governments on a specific product may not be representative of the policy position of other Governments, particularly in view of differing risk-benefit considerations. It is also important to realize that all pharmaceutical and chemical products are potentially harmful if not correctly used. In addition, the fact that a given product is not listed as regulated by a country does not necessarily mean that its use is permitted in that country. Rather, it may mean that the relevant regulatory decision to prohibit its use has not yet been communicated to the United Nations, WHO or UNEP. Alternatively, in the case of pharmaceuticals and pesticides, which are frequently subject to compulsory registration procedures, the product may not have been submitted for registration.

8. The application of criteria for the inclusion of pharmaceutical and chemical products in the List has significantly facilitated the screening of information to be contained in the publication. It is expected that the variation that continues between different Governments' application of the criterion "severely restricted" will decrease as a result of the implementation of the system of prior informed consent (PIC) developed jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNEP (see sect. III.B below).

9. The scope of information contained in the List remains the same as for previous issues.[1] Part I, compiled by the United Nations, WHO and UNEP/IRPTC, covers both monocomponent and combination pharmaceutical products and chemical products. Psychotropic and narcotic substances have been included only in cases where a country has notified WHO either that the substance is controlled more rigorously than is provided for under the relevant international conventions or that the substance has been subjected to national control before being considered for international scheduling. Part II of the List, compiled by the United Nations Secretariat, presents commercial information, including data on trade names and manufacturers, relating to a large proportion of the products included in part I of the List.

10. WHO regularly provides explanatory comments on pharmaceutical products to provide a context for certain regulatory actions. These comments serve to clarify cases in which Governments have taken conflicting regulatory actions in the light of different national priorities. UNEP and the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) are not in a position to provide similar comments on regulatory actions related to agricultural and industrial chemicals, owing to the large number of products in which these chemicals appear and the many applications of such products. Moreover, it is virtually impossible to comment on prohibitions or use restrictions for chemical products since risk-benefit assessments and subsequent decisions may differ considerably from country to country, depending on different national or local conditions, which most of the time may not be fully known to UNEP and/or IPCS.

C. Computer/Internet access

11. In response to the request from the General Assembly in its resolution 39/229 for direct computer access of the List, the information contained in the List was first transferred to diskettes in 1994 after it became possible to download the information from the mainframe to personal computers. The Secretariat is now studying the feasibility of also making the diskettes available as a sales item or on the Internet.

D. Periodicity and language versions

12. In its resolutions 39/229 and 44/226, the General Assembly stipulated the language requirements for publishing the List. These requirements have been carefully observed, although non-availability of the software required to produce formatted text in French and Spanish has delayed the final printing of the List in these two languages.

13. With the separation of pharmaceuticals and chemicals into two distinct issuances to be published in alternate years, the policy of alternating sets of languages for each issuance of the List with a limitation of no more than three languages each year will become more difficult to implement on a timely basis, particularly given the cost and availability of database facilities in other languages.

14. The various databases of WHO, UNEP and the United Nations Secretariat are maintained in English, and the updating and modification of the information in the Consolidated List is also done in English. A copy of the List in English could be made generally available, without any delays, until such time as similar database facilities are developed and/or acquired in other languages. Once that stage is reached, it would be possible to accelerate the translation process simply by adding translated entries directly into the database. The periodicity and availability of the List in the official languages should continue to be addressed in tandem with the question of direct computer access.

E. Dissemination and utilization

15. The List is the only document that presents, in a unified manner, information on restrictive regulatory decisions taken

by Governments on a range of pharmaceutical products and agricultural and industrial chemicals. As such, it is a valuable source of information for Governments in considering the scope for their eventual regulatory actions. Apart from Governments, the other users of the List are non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and media organizations. Public interest and consumer groups use the List to urge Governments and manufacturers to remove hazardous products from the marketplace, or to appraise citizens about the health-related effects of using certain products.

16. In section II of its resolution 44/226, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to consider ways and means of ensuring more effective involvement of non-governmental organizations in promoting the dissemination and utilization of the Consolidated List. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat responds positively to the many requests that it receives from non-governmental organizations for copies of the List. Each issue of the List is sent to major non-governmental organizations that are active in this area, such as the Pesticide Action Network, which opposes the misuse of pesticides and supports reliance on safe and sustainable pest-control methods. Copies of the List are also sent, on request, to consumer groups in developing countries, particularly those who are primarily involved in environmental activities and activities related to sustainable development. Other organizations, such as the International Organization of Consumers Unions and Greenpeace, use the information contained in the List to monitor the use of hazardous products, and distribute information to policy makers, the media and consumers.

17. In order to determine the use to which the List is being put, a questionnaire has been included in the publication, starting with the second issue. Information received from the responses to the questionnaire is analysed to determine the use of the List. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs intends to conduct a full survey of the utilization of the List in 1999 after the publication of the seventh issue; now that the List is being published separately for pharmaceuticals and chemicals, the seventh issue, containing information on chemicals only, will complete a full cycle under the new arrangement, which will be an appropriate time to conduct such a survey of users about the utilization of the List.

18. Although no systematic analysis of the use of the Consolidated List has been undertaken recently, some observations can be made with respect to its utilization based on previous experience and correspondence received from both Governments and non-state actors. The List has been instrumental in helping national authorities to disseminate information about products on the List and take actions ranging from the review of licensing provisions, laws and regulations to the enforcement of new laws or regulations. Often, the List is used to ascertain which products are severely restricted or banned elsewhere when they are still available in the country concerned.

III. Developments since the last triennial report

A. Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

19. The involvement of the United Nations system organizations in activities related to the protection of human health from chemical exposure and human environment from chemical pollution predates the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). However, the adoption of Agenda 21,[2] more specifically its chapter 19, provided new impetus to the ongoing work that was being carried out by the organizations of the United Nations system, as well as other concerned intergovernmental organizations, in the area of environmentally sound management of chemicals.

20. Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 contained six programme areas which were designated by UNCED for increased national and international efforts, including improved coordination (for listing of the programme areas, see A/50/182-E/1995/66, para. 38). In order to achieve some of these key objectives of the programme areas, new mechanisms for coordination at the international level were established, and work in certain existing areas was expanded and intensified. It is beyond the scope of the present report to document all the activities that have been undertaken by the United Nations system organizations under chapter 19 of Agenda 21 in the area of environmentally sound management of chemicals. The present report is limited to a description of some of those activities which are most directly relevant to the Consolidated List, although it is recognized that there are wider and important links with other chapters of Agenda 21, such as hazardous waste, freshwater, human health and atmosphere. Some of the activities under these initiatives, which are relevant to the present report, are described below.

1. Inter-Organizational Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals

21. Consultations between WHO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNEP, FAO, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) resulted in the establishment of the Inter-organizational Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC). The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) became the seventh participating member of IOMC in January 1998.

22. Specific coordinating mechanisms have been established for some programme or subprogramme areas, such as the harmonization of classification of chemicals, information exchange on toxic chemicals and chemical risks, pollutant release and transfer registers, and chemical accident prevention, preparedness and response. These mechanisms provide a regular forum for all interested bodies working in their respective areas to consult with each other on their programme plans and activities and discuss ways to ensure that their activities are mutually supportive of the overall objectives of the programme or subprogrammes.

23. The documentation published by IPCS as part of its normative functions of providing authoritative scientific sources that national authorities may use for the planning and development of regulatory actions and control measures includes environmental health criteria documents, the concise international chemical assessment documents, health and safety guides, international chemical safety cards, pesticide data sheets, the Classification of Pesticides by Hazard, guidelines to classification, poison information monographs, the reports and toxicological monographs of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives, and air and drinking water quality guidelines. The information contained in these documents complements the information provided in the Consolidated List.

2. Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety

24. In response to a request from UNCED, an international conference on chemical safety was convened at Stockholm in 1994, and one of its main outcomes was the establishment of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS). At its first meeting, the Forum, a non-institutional arrangement for cooperation among Governments, intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations for the promotion of chemical risk assessment and environmentally sound management of chemicals, adopted priorities for action for the effective implementation of the programme areas of chapter 19 of Agenda 21. The recommendations contained in the priorities for action were essentially addressed to Governments, but several of them were also aimed at guiding the work of international bodies in developing tools for use by Governments in meeting their national targets. In most areas, specific deadlines and targets were outlined against which progress could be measured for reporting to the second meeting of the Forum, which was held in 1997, and the third meeting of the Forum, scheduled to be held in the year 2000. Between meetings, the activities of the Forum are directed by an inter-sessional group, which met in 1995 and 1996 to discuss activities of the Forum and follow-up action being taken on recommendations. The third meeting of the inter-sessional group will be held in December 1998.

25. The second meeting of the Forum was held in February 1997 at Ottawa to review activities carried out since the first meeting, and made recommendations to the special session of the General Assembly to review progress in the implementation of Agenda 21. It was reported at the Forum that substantial progress had been made in achieving the targets included in chapter 19 of Agenda 21, especially in relation to identifying the risk to human health and the environment posed by persistent organic pollutants; accelerating the international assessment of the risks of chemicals; implementing the voluntary procedures and negotiating the legally binding instrument for prior informed consent; developing pollutant release and transfer registers; moving towards a globally harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals; the promotion of alternatives that reduce the need for using of chemicals (e.g., integrated pest management); and starting to deal with the problem of stocks of obsolete chemicals. The Forum also made a number of recommendations on the disposal of obsolete chemicals, pesticide risk reduction, and pollution release and transfer registers, and on emerging issues, such as endocrine disrupting substances.

B. Prior informed consent

26. In 1989, the FAO Conference, while adopting amendments to the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, introduced the principle of prior informed consent. At about the same time, the Governing Council of UNEP adopted the PIC principle and incorporated it into the London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on Chemicals in International Trade (UNEP/GC.14/17, annex IV). Both UNEP and FAO have elaborated guidelines for the principle of prior informed consent on the basis of a 1992 memorandum of understanding between the two organizations (for more specific details, see A/50/182), and have continued their collaboration in the operation of the PIC procedure. Since the implementation of the voluntary PIC procedures in 1989, 154 countries are now

participating in it, and 27 decision guidance documents have been prepared on 22 pesticides and five industrial chemicals.

27. Following the identification by the Governing Council of UNEP in 1991 and by UNCED in 1992 of the need for developing a legally binding PIC convention, the FAO Council in 1994 agreed to proceed with the preparation of a draft PIC convention as a part of the current FAO/UNEP programme on PIC, in cooperation with other concerned international and non-governmental organizations. In 1995, the UNEP Governing Council authorized UNEP to prepare and convene, together with FAO, an intergovernmental negotiating committee with a mandate to prepare an international legally binding instrument for the application of the PIC procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides in international trade.

28. After two years of negotiations, the Committee, at its fifth session, held at Brussels in March 1998, unanimously agreed on the text of a convention. It is envisaged that the next step will be the convening of a diplomatic conference for the purpose of adopting and signing the instrument. The Government of the Netherlands has offered to host such a conference at Rotterdam in September 1998.

C. Other developments

29. At the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the issue of domestically prohibited goods was incorporated into the work programme of the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment, and was discussed at its meeting in 1995. It was recognized by most of the WTO studies conducted on this issue that whereas international instruments already addressed the export of domestically prohibited goods – mainly chemicals, pharmaceuticals and hazardous waste – there was no instrument that addressed consumer products. It was also argued that although other instruments did exist, a number of them were voluntary in nature and were not therefore considered appropriate for dealing with consumer products. Accordingly, it was felt that the issue of domestically prohibited goods should be dealt with within the framework of WTO.

30. In its report to a 1996 ministerial conference, the Committee summarized the results of its work since its establishment, and made a number of recommendations. Recognizing the concerns expressed by developed and developing countries, it recommended that WTO members participate in the activities of other organizations that have expertise to provide technical assistance in this field, and that the WTO secretariat review all in-house information on the subject for the next meeting of the Committee.

31. At the 1997 meeting, it was proposed that the domestically prohibited goods notification system that had been in existence between 1982 and 1990 be revived, particularly since the decision taken to establish it still remained in force. However, no agreement was reached by the Committee on this issue, and the WTO secretariat was requested to prepare a study on the product coverage of the domestically prohibited goods notification system if it were to be revived, as well as on the possible format of notifications. The issue is to be addressed at the next meeting of the Committee on Trade and Environment, scheduled to be held later in 1998.

D. Technical assistance/capacity-building

32. Programme area E of chapter 19 of Agenda 21 deals with national and regional capacity-building and strengthening capabilities for the identification, management and reduction of risks posed by chemicals to human health and the environment. Although most developed countries have at least some systems in place for the environmentally sound management of chemicals, many developing countries have only very limited facilities or none at all. The development of adequate human resources capability, including training for decision-making on regulatory measures and improved access to information, is essential.

33. Concerned United Nations system organizations coordinate their technical assistance activities in the area of capacity-building for developing countries either separately or jointly through IOMC. The establishment of IOMC has strengthened the coordination of activities in chemical assessment and management and reduced the chances of duplication.

34. In the context of strengthening national capabilities and capacities, IFCS proposed that all countries develop, through intersectoral cooperation, a national profile on national infrastructures for the sound management of chemicals. Such profiles would be examined in a national workshop, at which needs would be identified and actions proposed to strengthen and/or set up the required structures and generate longer-term technical cooperation support to the country. Many developing countries and countries with economies in transition that are currently being assisted in the preparation of their national profiles through the UNITAR/IOMC national profile support programme have made significant progress towards the preparation of comprehensive assessments of their chemicals management infrastructure.

35. Over 40 countries have so far prepared first official versions of their profile, and building on these profiles, several of them have organized national follow-up workshops to identify priority areas of chemical management and develop national action programmes, with the assistance of UNITAR. In addition, four countries have initiated national action programmes with assistance from UNITAR/IOMC under the pilot programme to assist countries in implementing national action programmes for integrated chemicals management.

36. In order to ensure effective implementation of the PIC procedure, FAO and UNEP, in cooperation with UNITAR, continue to provide technical assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the form of workshops and meetings, through the joint programme for the operation of PIC, in order to provide government officials with training with a view to strengthening both the decision-making and regulatory capabilities of the respective countries. With the expected transition from the voluntary PIC procedure to a legally binding instrument later in 1998, there will be a need to expand technical assistance activities in this area.

37. UNEP has been developing legislative guidance documents on chemical management. International policies and standards regarding the safety of chemicals at work are formulated by the ILO. The ILO also provides specific safety training to labour inspectorates, and assists developing countries in establishing or strengthening their administrative and legal framework so that they will eventually be equipped to undertake the process of ratifying ILO instruments. UNIDO continues to pay particular attention to training in the safe formulation and application of pesticides, and has published safety guidelines in this area, and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) is cooperating with OECD to extend to ECE countries with economies in transition systems and practices for the safe handling of chemicals established by OECD.

38. The first edition of the IOMC inventory of activities summary report, listing in an abbreviated format activities that directly support the programme areas of chapter 19 of Agenda 21 by all participating organizations and UNITAR, was published in December 1996. The second edition of the inventory will be published for distribution at the third meeting of the inter-sessional group of IFCS, to be held at Yokohama, Japan, from 1 to 4 December 1998.

IV. Future trends and emerging issues

39. Over the past several years, the risks associated with persistent organic pollutants (POPs) have become of increasing concern to many countries, and have resulted in regional and global action, in addition to national programmes. For example, the development of a POPs protocol under the ECE Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution will probably be completed in 1998.

40. Globally, work on POPs has been undertaken in a number of forums, including IFCS and UNEP, culminating in the decision of the UNEP Governing Council in 1997 that international action is required to reduce the risk to human health and the environment arising from the 12 POPs[3] that were subject to an international assessment completed by IPCS.

41. This decision of UNEP calls for the preparation, together with WHO and other relevant international organizations, of an intergovernmental negotiating committee with the objective of preparing an international legally binding instrument to implement international action on these 12 POPs. Meanwhile, UNEP and IFCS are jointly conducting POPs awareness-raising workshops in different regions to facilitate immediate national action to address POPs and to help prepare Governments for upcoming negotiations on a POPs convention. The first POPs INC session is scheduled for 29 June to 3 July 1998.

42. Another emerging issue of concern is the impact of endocrine disrupting substances on human health and the ecosystem. An increasing number of scientific studies are rapidly accumulating new information which indicates that these substances have the potential to interfere with the normal functions of the body governed by endocrine. A number of countries have expressed concern about these findings, and IFCS has requested IOMC organizations to address the issue of endocrine disruptors through a number of activities, such as promoting coordinated research strategies, identifying research priorities and gaps, delineating testing methods, harmonizing guidelines, maintaining an inventory of research activities and facilitating information exchange.

43. The issue of the effects of environmental regulations on trade in general and of a legally binding instrument for PIC procedure on trade in hazardous chemicals in particular is a very complex one that needs careful further examination in appropriate forums in order to induce compliance with multilateral environmental agreements.

44. Progress is being made with technical work based on major existing systems to harmonize classification and labelling of chemicals, but an international framework is required to translate the results of the technical work into a legally binding instrument. At the same time, much more

work needs to be done at the national level to bring existing systems and legislation in line with any agreed international standards.

45. As part of a longer-term objective, appropriate United Nations bodies should encourage efforts to find substitutes for harmful chemicals, use of safer technologies and processes, and the implementation of effective preventive and protective measures.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

46. The importance and usefulness of the Consolidated List for the dissemination of information on hazardous products has long been recognized by Governments, intergovernmental bodies, such as the Commission on Sustainable Development, non-governmental organizations and grass-roots consumer groups, and it should continue to refer to and draw upon all the technical work being accomplished within the system, with references to relevant complementary publications and conventions.

47. Considerable progress has been achieved in the development of the Consolidated List, and the recent decision to focus exclusively on pharmaceuticals and chemicals in alternate issues, along with computerized maintenance and production, should make the List more user-friendly. The results of the intended survey of the recipients of the List, to be carried out after the issuance of the seventh edition, when integrated into the preparatory arrangements for future issuances of the List, should also help to make the List more useful for its intended users. However, the problems relating to issuing the List in alternating sets of languages will need to be addressed.

Recommendation 1

48. The List could be prepared and published regularly every year in English, with other languages lagging behind temporarily until similar database and formatting facilities are available in all languages; alternatively, it could be issued in other languages at the same time as English, as a text file without comparable formatting (see paras. 12-14 above).

49. Treaties on chemicals, such as the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, including recently concluded negotiations on legally binding instrument on PIC procedure and the proposal to start similar negotiations on POPs, indicate that increased international efforts are under way to protect human health and the environment from the noxious effects of hazardous chemicals. The Consolidated List already reports on regulatory actions relating to most of the chemicals and chemical compounds relevant to these agreements, but there is a need to increase its coverage of reporting countries, and to expand the number and scope of the products covered.

Recommendation 2

50. An important means of widening the coverage of reporting countries is to increase the scale of assistance to countries, particularly in the area of capacity-building. This should help to make an even larger number of countries more conscious of the need to regulate the use of products that are harmful to health and the environment, and strengthen their national capabilities for taking the necessary action.

Recommendation 3

51. There is a need to have a legally binding PIC procedure adopted at the diplomatic conference at Rotterdam, and to have it signed and ratified without undue delay.

Recommendation 4

52. It is important that the domestically prohibited goods notification system be revived, and the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment could be invited to take speedy action in this regard.

Recommendation 5

53. In the area of risk assessment, although most technical work is continuing elsewhere to produce quality data on which to base chemical risk assessments, United Nations system organizations should continue to encourage efforts towards better understanding of the potential risks from exposure to chemicals.

Notes

[1] For previous issues of the Consolidated List, see United Nations publications, Sales Nos. E.85.IV.8, E.87.IV.1, E.91.IV.4, E.94.IV.3 and E.97.IV.2.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and Corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[3] Aldrin, chlordane, DDT, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor, mirex, toxaphene, hexachlorobenzene, PCBs, dioxins and furans.